

FACT SHEET

Are There Guidelines for Working with An Interpreter?

Typically organizations have one of three options for securing the use of qualified¹ interpreters. These are:

- Recruit, train and test your own interpreters “in house” using an accepted interpreter training curriculum;
- Recruit your own interpreters and send your interpreters to an interpreter training organization for training and testing, or
- Purchase the services of a trained and tested interpreter from an interpretation service provider.

Regardless of the option selected by the organization, there are certain things that all service providers can expect when working with an interpreter and these expectations are typically addressed in the interpreter training program. This includes:

Several organizations have created and shared guidelines with their service providers to ensure a consistent approach to working with interpreters across the organization. See the Thames Valley “General Guidelines for Working with an Interpreter” and Across Language’s “20 Tips for Working With an Interpreter” for an example of such a guideline.

¹ Qualified refers to interpreters who are trained according to a program generally accepted as being 70 – 120 hours in duration and includes core competencies in the areas of ethics, skills and sector specific knowledge, and further that the same interpreters have passed an acceptable language interpretation test, such as ILSAT or CILISAT with a score of 75% or more. The term “qualified” is used interchangeably with “trained” and “professional”.

